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[For information on the size of various St. Helena plantations under White ownership, see Category 116, pp. 41-45; for information on the historical background of the planters themselves, see Category 116, pp. 103-123.]

1: Federal W-5 (no date) 1986
NN23 Sea Islanders NN23
Georgia

Wilmington Island

115 UNCLE JACK TATTNALL* AND UNCLE ROBERT PINCK-
226 ney ** are river men. For many years they have earned a frugal living by casting for shrimp or crabbing or fishing in the Wilmington River. Apparently they are in little fear of the elements. Winter or summer, at whatever hour of the day or night the tide is "right," they are on the water in their bateaux.

•311 Many of the Wilmington Island Negroes depend upon the
461 river for their livelihood. In leisure hours, here as in other
322 sections, skillful fingers carve or weave to pass the time away.
532 We were fortunate in being shown a walking stick (Plate
481 IIb)[A] carved some years before by an old fisherman of the island.† The delicately detailed figure of a human being formed a third of the stick, with hair, features, fingers, and shoes carefully executed. The narrow thin figure stood stiffly gowned in a garment edged with a saw-tooth design.

124 For some time we had been anxious to obtain interviews with Uncle Jack and Uncle Robert, who were among the oldest inhabitants of Wilmington Island, in order that we might learn something regarding beliefs and customs that had been handed down to them. Until the present time, we had met with little success.

124 A barbecue to be held in the side yard of Celia Small, one
114 of the islanders, at last gave us the long hoped for opportunity of meeting a number of the residents at one time.

* *Jack Tattnall, Wilmington Island.*
** *Robert Pinckney, Thunderbolt.*
† *Property of Edward A. Sieg, 128 West Jones Street, Savannah.*

A. [See Category 322, plate following p. xxxii-B--Analyst]

2: Jones-Jackson L-5 (1973-1986) 1987
NN23 Sea Islanders NN23
South Carolina

river island rather than a saltwater ocean island.[3] The islands just off the coast of Charleston include James, Johns, Wadmalaw, Edisto, and Yonges, among many others. The Sea Islands of Georgia extend on the northern coast from Harris Neck; on the southern coast they include Sapelo, Darien, St. Simons, and St. Marys.

The Sea Islands and surrounding areas were a mere submerged portion of the continental shelf during the early geologic history of North America. As time passed, the ocean retreated to its present position, and the low flatlands left behind became known as the Georgia and Carolina low country.[4]

The Sea Islands are tranquil, flat, swampy lands with elevations ranging from near sea level to slightly over 100 feet. The climate is generally mild throughout the year, with very few recordings of drastically low temperatures. The coastal areas are characterized by slightly higher annual temperatures than other areas, primarily because of their proximity to the ocean.[5] The climatogram shown in Figure 1 illustrates the changes at various times of the year.

The Sea Island area is characterized by deep rivers snaking along the coast and dividing the land into countless large and small islands. The sandy soil, which drains inadequately, places economic and developmental constraints on the area. Road building is extremely difficult in spots; some islands still have no paved roads. The 1979 regional housing market analysis for the Berkeley-Charleston-Dorchester (BCD) Council of Governments estimated that 90 percent of the land area within Charleston County, which includes many of the Carolina Sea Islands, is composed of soils that put moderate to severe limitations on land use for urban development. The soil has poor load-bearing capacities, in addition to the prevailing poor drainage. Thus, financing for development must include provisions for land improvement as well as adequate drainage systems. Of the 2,614 square miles of land within the BCD region, only 5 percent has been developed for urban use; remaining portions of the coastal region are primarily rural.[6] Slightly more than half of the area is forest and woodlands. The marsh and swamplands, nearly a quarter of the total, grow little but marsh weeds, owing to the ebb and flow of daily tidal waters. These lands are flat and dangerous; there are reports of unfortunate islanders' being caught in "suckholes" or "mashmud" and never returning. The overall pattern of land use is summarized in Table 1.

Few bridges, with the exception of wooden crossings, connected

2: Jones-Jackson L-5 (1973-1986) 1987
NN23 Sea Islanders NN23
South Carolina

Table 1. Land Use for BCD Region

Category	*Acres*	*% of Total*
Developed areas		
Urban uses	75,000	4.29
Residential	21,000	1.20
Commercial	3,500	0.20
Industrial	12,600	0.72
Public and other	37,900	2.17
Agricultural uses		
Cropland and pasture	178,800	10.23
Forest and woodlands (excluding swampland forests)	861,740	49.30
Undeveloped areas		
Marsh and swampland	416,600	23.83
Inland waterways	140,800	8.06
Total	1,747,940	100.00

Source: BCD Council of Governments, *Regional Housing Market Analysis*, 1975, p. 5; figuring corrected.

the islands to the mainland before 1940. Though considerable sums of money have been expended within recent years on the construction of long, narrow bridges to span the Atlantic coast, ocean recesses, rivers, and streams, the more remote islands, such as Sandy and Daufuski, continue to be inaccessible except by boat.[7] Most of the Sea Islands remain very sparsely settled despite the population growth brought on by recent industrialization and commercialization. The landscape is pastoral and mysterious compared to inland areas of the United States. Most islands are characterized by graceful palmetto trees, expansive green terrain, and atmospheric haze. The landscape in fact bears a striking resemblance to the topography of such coastal countries as Nigeria, Ghana, Angola, and Liberia, the tropical homelands of the Sea Islanders' ancestors.[8]

Electricity came to the more remote islands only as recently as the 1960s. Streetlights rarely line the narrow roadways of even the more developed islands, and in late evening the overhanging trees give the roads a ghostly allure. After nightfall it is literally impossible to see even two feet ahead.[9]

2: Jones-Jackson L-5 (1973-1986) 1987
NN23 Sea Islanders NN23
South Carolina

423 The original owner of the island, one of the major church denomina-
177 tions, sold it to a group of developers, who in turn sold it to a second group, from New York. No input from the community was requested, and a great deal of hostility resulted. When developers came to Kiawah to create a much larger resort area, they expressed readiness to meet community needs and asked for a list. The time available to come up with this list was brief, but island leaders working with Bill Jenkins, a long-time activist in land issues, did manage to set out six or seven mostly minor suggestions. "We did it in good faith," notes Jenkins. "I think we were more in good faith than they were, because some of those things we are still trying to get."

"I remember as a little boy," says Ed Brown, "that you could purchase perhaps an acre of land for two hundred dollars. Today that's just unheard of. So the very basic thing that gives the islands their wealth, namely, the property, is increasing in value, but we need to develop a methodology by which that can be properly managed and the profits therefrom, if there are to be profits, channeled back into the islands for their development." He adds, "I see good things. I'm an eternal optimist. I think that the future will prove to be very fruitful . . . if we can learn from the mistakes." Yet he does not deny that there have been mistakes, for instance, the absence of "a working rapport between the people who operate these resorts and the people who in fact live on these islands, and who have lived there for quite some time."

423 Land is being taken out of production. Acreage once used to grow
•311 food is now restricted and controlled by high taxes and county regula-
177 tions implemented in response to development. Small livestock farmers located next to tracts under new ownership may be pressured to sell out if their activities seem incompatible with the projects of the developers. Lands are lost, too, when people unused to record keeping lose tax receipts and forget to pay yearly bills, or when land descends to heirs who have moved away and have no interest in it.

423 Bill Jenkins has provided an illustration of what can happen when
177 developers are more interested in a piece of property than its legal owners:

> There's seventy-nine acres of land down at Johns Island airport. . . . Developers . . . did some research and found out who were some of the people who were involved in that property. [One of

4: Carawan & Carawan B,Z-5 (1959-1988) 1989
NN23 Sea Islanders NN23
South Carolina
Johns Island

good deal. He founded the Committee on Better Racial Assurance (COBRA), a multi-issue community organization in Charleston also serving the sea islands. He has been chairman of the Charleston County Democratic party. He ran for state senate and received support in both the black and white communities. He is the owner of WPAL, a vital radio station in Charleston that consistently addresses social issues as well as responds to the musical tastes of the community. He was the principal mediator in the major civil rights campaign of the Charleston area—a strike of hospital workers in the late 1960s.

The job situation on Johns Island has improved slightly. In the 1960s all young people who finished high school left the area to find work. Now, with improved transportation, it is possible for them to work in Charleston and still live on the island. The resort developments and the new small businesses offer some employment, but farming, long a mainstay in the island economy, is steadily declining. Farmland is now the prime target of developers. But the people who have stayed on Johns Island have held onto a firm determination to live in their traditional community, and many of their hopes and dreams are still in place.

Development on Johns Island has taken two forms. Tourist development, spreading rapidly all along the coastal islands south of Washington, D.C., is a threat to the indigenous population on Johns Island. Kiawah and Seabrook, accessible only by driving across Johns Island, are full-fledged resort communities with condominiums, hotels and inns, shops and boutiques, and large private homes. Both are entered by passing through a security checkpoint. Viewed initially as offering some economic and social benefits to island residents, both have been disappointing, catering to wealthy visitors from outside the region and offering only menial and limited employment. Wadmalaw Island, just across the Esau Jenkins Memorial Bridge from Johns Island, is in the throws of plans for development. An island committee made up of black and white landowners has been meeting regularly to design their own development plan that may

(P xiii, B)

11: Johnson H-4,5 (no date) 1930
(1525-ca. 1880)
NN23 Sea Islanders NN23
South Carolina
St. Helena Island

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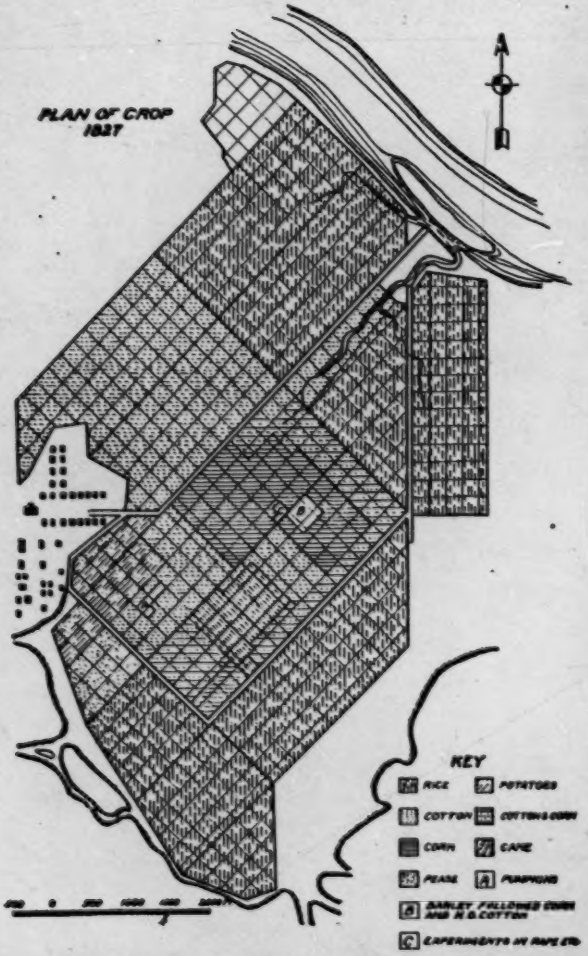

HOPETON PLANTATION ON THE ALTAMAHA

[D. 63]